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ABSTRACT

In order both to examine critically the present status of speech-theatre course offerings, co-curricular programs, and staff credentials in Arizona high schools, and to survey school administrators as well as speech and drama teachers to determine Arizona's need for speech-theatre personnel, questionnaires were sent to personnel in all 138 Arizona high schools. A total of 103 schools responded, and each answer was tabulated by total number and then by percentage. Findings showed that (1) speech and drama courses are not required, are often considered as electives, and assume a low-status role in many school curricula; (2) the most frequently cited reason for lack of participation in speech and drama activities was lack of interest; (3) there is a marked improvement in teacher qualification since 1963; and (4) many schools (39) not offering speech and drama courses plan to include them in the curriculum in the near future, and many other schools expect to improve and expand existing courses and activities. Appendixes provide a list of reporting schools, the questionnaire (with results), and cover letters. (JM)

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A SURVEY OF SPEECH AND DRAMA ACTIVITIES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ARIZONA

Carolyn Hoffman

As the need for more effective communication increases in our society, the educator in the field of speech and drama plays an important role in helping people become more effective communicators. Both students and faculty are concerned with speech education and are interested in providing a curricula which adheres to modern teaching responsibilities. One way to better improve the teaching of speech and drama is by examining present programs and evaluating their effectiveness in educating people as communicators.

This paper attempts to: 1) critically examine the present status of speech-theatre course offerings, co-curricular programs and staff credentials in Arizona high schools and 2) survey school administrators and speech and drama teachers to determine Arizona's need for speech-theatre personnel.

Such an examination should provide insights into two areas:

1) the speech competencies of the graduating students in speech and drama departments (what speech and drama students have to offer);
2) the marketability of graduating students in speech and drama education.

Procedures and Methodology

Standard survey techniques were employed in conducting the survey, The questionnaire, because of its effectiveness to produce general overall conclusions and analysis, was the instrument chosen to survey the population.

The survey population consisted of all 138 Arizona high schools. It was decided to use the total population to assure a high return of questionnaires and a large sample population. A mailing list was obtained from the Arizona Interscholastic Association. Questionnaires, with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, were sent either to the administrator - if this was the only individual listed on the mailing list - or to the speech and drama personnel in each high school.

The first mailing produced a 51% return. One week later a follow-up letter (to encourage a maximum response) and a second questionnaire form with a self-addressed stamped envelope were sent to the remaining schools who had not replied (see copies of letters in appendix). After this mailing, an additional 25% of the total survey population returned the questionnaire. This brought the return to a total of 76% - 103 out of 138 high schools reporting.

EDITORS NOTE: Miss Hoffman is a Senior Speech-Theatre major at Northern Arizona University. This study was directed by Professor Daniel Julien, Jr.

Tabulation

Tabulation of material was done manually by the surveyor. Each question was tabulated by total number and then by a percentage. Free-response questions were tabulated by means of simplified content analysis and grouping of similar answers and comments under headings.

Results

The analysis and results of the survey were divided into four areas:

I. Speech and Drama Course Offerings
II. Speech and Drama Activities
III. Speech and Drama Personnel Qualifications
IV. Future Speech and Drama Activities

I. Speech and Drama Course Offerings

An overview of this area indicated that a majority of schools reporting (82) did not have individual speech and drama departments. The writer defined "department" to mean the teaching of several classes of speech and drama by one or more teachers with emphasis placed on speech and drama as subjects separate from another discipline, i.e., English.

Sixty-four (64) responding high schools included speech and drama as offerings in the English curriculum; other respondents included speech in language arts or as an extra-curricular club.

Speech class offerings also varied throughout the state with basic and advanced speech courses predominating (73 schools). Other course offerings included: oral interpretation, debate, discussion, radio-TV, forensics, etc

Drama courses provided a wide range of offerings. Beginning and advanced drama was offered most frequently with variations including: stagecraft, acting, body movement, pantomime, directing, lighting, interpretive reading, etc.

Speech and drama courses have not been established as requirements in most Arizona high schools. Forty-nine (49) of the schools reported speech and drama were considered electives, while only six (6) schools required them. Others reported the offering of courses for those students who fail English or the awarding of English credit to students taking speech and drama courses.

Respondents also reported on the inadequacies of their departments. Of the schools reporting, seventy-two (72) stated that their departments and programs were inadequate. Thirty-two (32) high schools indicated that lack of student interest was the major factor for such inadequacies.

Observation and Analysis

Several observations can be made regarding speech and drama course offerings in the State of Arizona.

It appears that Arizona schools are attempting to establish the area of speech and drama as a separate area of focus in their curriculum.

Currently, however, speech and drama courses are not required, are often considered as electives, and assume a low-status role in many school curriculums. An attempt must be made to educate school personnel as to the validity and necessity of speech and drama courses. The lack of student interest that appears as a prevelant reason for inadequate speech and drama programs also must be eliminated before speech and drama can warrant a separate emphasis and status.

II. Speech and Drama Activities

Of the schools reporting, sixty (60) answered that they participated in many speech and drama activities. The majority of these activities were state AIA sponsored tournaments (district and state) in addition to intra-school competition, college, and other speech tournaments.

The most commonly cited reason for a lack of participation in activities was a lack of student interest.

Observation and Analysis

Although many schools reported that they did participate in speech and drama activities, the "lack of student interest" again calls for close examination. All efforts must be made to promote student interest and expand speech and drama activities to meet the needs of greater numbers of students.

III. Speech and Drama Personnel Qualifications

The respondents indicated teaching assignments were varied. Sixty-four (64) of the personnel were teaching either speech or drama or a combination of speech and drama. The most typical combination was Speech and English (35), while sixteen (16) indicated Drama and English. Other teaching assignments included speech and humanities and speech and guidance counseling.

The survey indicated that Arizona speech and drama teachers prepared for their teaching assignments with substantial coursework. Sixty-two (62) speech and drama teachers had at least 35 hours in speech and drama course work and fifty-three (53) respondents indicated they had taken at least eighteen (18) hours in speech and drama. Twenty-eight (28) respondents had attained a masters degree in speech and drama. Twenty-eight (28) teachers who are teaching speech and drama have English degrees, while fifteen (15) teachers have no training or are teaching with state minimal requirements.

The survey further indicated that speech and drama teachers throughout the state are very active in sponsoring related speech and drama activities, such as debate, individual events, radio-TV, drama, Thespians, Toastmasters, talent shows and other programs. In addition, speech and drama teachers in the state belong to professional organizations on the local, state and national level.

Observation and Analysis

If the current findings are compared to those of a similar (1963) study by Marie Dulzer (M.A. Thesis, University of Arizona), a marked improvement in teacher qualification is noted. When the area of speech and drama becomes a separate department in Arizona high schools, these teachers finally will be able to devote all of their efforts to speech and drama rather than be called upon to teach in unrelated areas.

IV Future Speech and Drama Activities

The final area examined was the future of speech and drama activities. Thirty-nine schools reporting indicated that speech and drama would be introduced in their future curriculum.

Many schools (39) who do not already offer speech and drama in their curriculum are planning to offer it in the near future and many Arizona high schools are planning to improve and expand their speech and drama course offerings and activities.

Observation and Analysis

The outlook for speech and drama activities in Arizona high schools appears to be improving. Many high schools are planning to improve and expand their speech and drama course offerings and activities. Included in the expansion of speech and drama course offerings and activities are the additions of new speech and drama personnel as well as new and expanded facilities.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Studies

Speech and drama is growing in Arizona high schools. There are many areas remaining, however, which need marked improvements. Speech and drama still remains a part of other disciplines, i.e., English, and is not required in most schools. While activities are expanding, there is a major concern in regard to "lack of student interest." On the other hand, personnel qualifications show a marked improvement as compared to Dulzer's study. More personnel also belong to professional organizations. The future of speech and drama activities is on the increase. Many schools who do not already offer speech and drama in their curriculums are planning to offer it in the near future. Others are planning to improve and expand their speech and drama course offerings and activities, including the addition of personnel and new, expanded facilities.

The near future will present a new picture as speech and drama curricular and co-curricular activities grow in Arizona high schools. Further studies could provide an examination of the growth that speech and drama has made in the past decade, thus helping us examine the current improvements and developments in speech and drama in Arizona high schools. A more in-depth study could be made to examine the reasons for "lack of

student interest" that are a major factor in the inadequacies of contemporary activities and programs. Another study could examine how population and size of high schools effects speech and drama activities. Most important, however, is that further studies are made. Without these studies, the opportunity is lost to improve the teaching of speech and drama by examining and evaluating the effectiveness of on-going programs to educate people to become better communicators.

APPENDIX I

ARIZONA HIGH SCHOOLS REPORTING

Agua Fria High School
Ajo High School
Alchesay High School
Alhambra High School
Antelope Union High School
Apache Junction High School
Arcadia High School
Arizona State Industrial School
Arizona State School for Deaf and Blind
Ash Fork High School
Bagdad High School
Benson Union High School
Bisbee High School
Bourgade High School
Brophy College Preparatory
Buckeye Union High School
Buena High School
Camelback High School
Canyon del Oro High School
Carl Hayden High School
Catalina High School
Central High School
Chaparral High School
Cholla High School
Clifton High School
Coconino High School
Coolidge High School
Coronado High School
Douglas High School
Dysart High School
Flagstaff High School
Fort Thomas High School
Ganado High School
Gerard High School
Gila Bend High School
Gilbert High School
Glendale High School
Grand Canyon High School
Hayden High School
Holbrook High School
Joseph City High School
Kingman High School
Kofa High School
Lake Havasu High School
Many Farms High School
Marana High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Maricopa High School
Mayer High School
McClintock High School
McNary High School
Mesa High School
Miami High School
Mingus Union High School
Mohave High School
Monument Valley High School
Moon Valley High School
Morenci High School
North High School
Page High School
Paradise Valley High School
Parker High School
Patagonia Union High School
Payson High School
Phoenix Christian High School
Phoenix Indian High School
Phoenix Union High School
Pima High School
Prescott High School
Pueblo High School
Rincon High School
Sabino High School
Safford High School
Saguaro High School-Scottsdale
Sahuaro High School-Tucson
St. John's Indian High School
Salome High School
Salpointe High School
San Manuel High School
San Simon High School
Santa Cruz Valley Union High School
Scottsdale High School
Seligman High School
Seton High School
Show Low High School
Snowflake High School
Sunnyside High School
Sunnyslope High School
Superior High School
Tempe High School
Thatcher High School
Thunderbird High School
Tolleson Union High School
Tuba City High School
Tucson High School
Valley Union High School
Washington High School

LIST OF SCHOOLS
APPENDIX I CONT.

West High School
Westwood High School
Wickenburg High School
Williams High School
Winslow High School
Xavier High School
Yuma High School

103 - 138 High Schools Reporting Survey

APPENDIX II
COVER LETTER

March 27, 1973

Enclosed you will find a valuable questionnaire; valuable because it will give you an opportunity to examine the speech and drama course offerings and activities in your school. Now more than ever there is an increasing need for speech and drama courses in our high school curriculua and in order to improve these course offerings, we must critically examine the status quo.

The information this questionnaire will provide is the basis of an independent study in which I am involved at Northern Arizona University, and funded by the Arizona Speech and Drama Association. Because of your cooperation in answering the survey question, I will be able to offer you a "birds-eye" view of your state's high schools speech and drama activities and it will also help determine what preparation is needed for future speech and drama teachers in secondary speech education in Arizona.

The results of this survey will appear in the fall issue of the Journal of the Arizona Speech and Drama Association.

Please return the self-addressed questionnaire brochure by April 16, 1973.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Hoffman

"He gave man speech, and speech created thought,
Which is the measure of the Universe."

----Acts 11. 4

APPENDIX III

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

March 27, 1973

A few weeks ago I wrote to you requesting that you complete a questionnaire concerning an examination of speech and drama activities in the secondary schools in Arizona, with an opportunity to critically examine your school's speech and drama course offerings and activities.

I realize that you would like to respond to my questionnaire, but since you are very busy you probably set it aside thinking that it could be filled out at a later date. I am enclosing another questionnaire which is self-addressed for your convenience.

Because of the importance and value of this questionnaire, I would ask that you take a few minutes to fill it out and return it to me as soon as possible. Your comments and information are of utmost importance to my study and without them the study will be incomplete.

If you have recently sent the first questionnaire, please disregard this letter.

Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Hoffman

APPENDIX IV

RESULTS

A SURVEY OF SPEECH AND DRAMA EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ARIZONA

Name of School _____

Mailing Address _____

Total Enrollment _____

Name(s) and Title(s) of Person(s) Completing this Survey Form: _____

_____

Teacher(s) Responsible for Your Speech and/or Drama Program: _____

_____

I: SPEECH AND DRAMA COURSE OFFERINGS

Regular Speech Class:

1. Does your school have a speech department? Yes 21 No 82

2. Does your school have a drama department? Yes 19 No 82

Speech Unit in Another Subject Area:

3. If your school does not have separate speech and drama departments, is speech and drama offered in another subject area? yes 73 No 14 Please specify what area English - 64 Fine Arts - 20, Extra-curricular club - 1

4. Please list those classes that are included in your speech offerings: Beginning Speech - 73, Debate - 19, Radio-TV - 3 Advanced Speech - 34, Oral Interpretation - 9 Readers Theater - 1

5. Please list those classes that are included in your drama offerings: Beginning Drama - 49, Acting - 14, History - 2 Pantomime-Improvisational - 3, Advanced Drama - 32, Stagecraft - 12 Drama as Literature - 5

6. If speech and drama units are offered as a part of the English program, what percentage of time is spent on speech and drama activities? 0-25 % 58 no responses

7. If speech is a part of the curriculum, is it considered a: Requirement for all students 6 Requirement for selected students 3 Explain: Elective - 49 no requirement - 15 Students who flunk English - 2

8. During what year(s) is your speech unit taught?
Freshman 6 Soph 29 Junior 31 Senior 31
All four years 45

9. Do you feel that the speech and drama departments at you school are adequate? Yes 24 No 72

10. If the answer to question (9) is no, please check the reasons why: Lack of student interest 32 No qualified instructors 11
Not enough speech and drama personnel 19
Financial difficulties 23 Lack of Faculty cooperation 10
Lack of Administrator cooperation 14 Other Need separate Dept., Lack of Facilities, Size of Student Body

II: SPEECH AND DRAMA ACTIVITIES

1. Does your school participate in co-curricular speech and drama activities? Yes 60 No 38

2. If your school does participate in speech and drama activities, please check the ones that your school participates in.
District and State AIA Speech Tourn 54 Other debate Tourn 35
Other Speech tourn (Ind events) 40 Other drama competition 7
Intra-school activities 29 Speech and Drama Club 50
College and Univ. sponsored tourn 37 Which ones ASU - 23
NAU - 15, U of A - 15

3. If your school does not participate in co-curricular speech and drama activities, which of the following reasons would best fit your school? Financial difficulties 18 Lack of student interest 19 Lack of Faculty interest 11 Not familiar with such activities 7 Tournament travel 11 Spch. and drama coach receives no pay for sponsoring activities 17
Other: Students in conflicting activities, size of school, conflicting other co-curricular activities, no time

III: SPEECH AND DRAMA PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

1. Indicate the number of speech and/or drama teacher assignments:
Full time speech 14 Full time drama 21 Speech and Drama 29
Speech and Eng. - 35 Drama and Eng - 16 Sp-Dr-Eng-4

2. Of the total number of speech and drama teachers employed, how many of these teachers have at least (35) hours in speech and drama college course work? 62 (may represent several from one school) 21 - no 35 hrs.

3. Of the total number of speech and drama teachers employed, how many of these teachers have at least (18) hours in speech and drama college course work? 53, 11 - no 18 hrs.

4. Of the total number of speech and drama teachers employed, how many of these teachers have a Masters Degree in speech and/or drama? 28

5. If the speech and drama teacers employed do not have teaching majors or minors in speech and drama, what qualifications do they have to teach speech and/or drama at your school?
English teaching degree 28 State minimal requirements 13
No related qualifications 2 Other: North Central Accreditation

6. What additional speech and drama activities do the speech and drama teachers sponsor? Debate 39 Indiv Speech Events (Extemp, Oratory, Impromptu) 51 Other: Thespians, Toastmaster, Spch. Club, Intra-school activities, Musicals, Childrens and Readers Theater

7. How much time is spent by speech and drama teachers sponsoring these co-curricular speech activities? mean 5-20 hours per week.

8. What professional organizations do your speech and drama teachers belong to?
Amer. Forensic Assoc. 16 Ariz. Spch. and Drama Assoc. 36
Forensic League of Ariz. 33 Spch. Communication Assoc. 3
Western Spch Communication Assoc. 0 Other: Educ. organizations - ATA, AEA, NEA, CTA, AETA, NCTE

9. During the past two (2) years, what tournaments has your school hosted? FLA - 6, AIA - 6, Individual Tourn. - 7, Intra-school - 1, Debate - 3

10. Do your speech and drama teachers receive compensation in addition to their regular salary for sponsoring co-curricular speech activities? Yes 60 No 35
If yes, explain: Sponsorship of Plays, Forensics Directors, Mean - $200/yr additional pay

IV: FUTURE SPEECH AND DRAMA ACTIVITIES

1. Do you believe speech and/or drama might be introduced in your future curriculum? Yes 39 No 16

2. How do you perceive the future speech and drama activities in your curriculum? (See observation & analysis in paper for results)
Additional comments in regard to this survey:

Thank you for your cooperation It is greatly appreciated. Please return the questionnaire today.